

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2003  
9:30 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Bernie Heier, Chair  
Ray Stevens, Vice Chair  
Larry Hudkins  
Bob Workman  
Deb Schorr

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Norm Agena, County Assessor/Register of Deeds  
Gary Lacey, County Attorney  
Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk  
Trish Owen, Chief Deputy County Clerk  
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

The Staff Meeting was called to order at 9:34 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1 APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY,  
JANUARY 16, 2003**

Stevens requested that Item 2D be corrected to state that the address for Roper & Sons Resource & Outreach Center is 4400 South 70<sup>th</sup> Street.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded approval of the Staff Meeting minutes of January 16, 2003, with that correction. Hudkins, Schorr, Heier, Workman and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried.

**2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None were stated.

### 3 PRELIMINARY BUDGET DISCUSSION - Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer

Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, distributed copies of a legal opinion written in 1990 addressing mandated and discretionary county functions (Exhibit A).

Hudkins requested an updated list of mandated services and a list of services funded through the Joint Budget Committee (JBC).

Workman asked that the information be provided in the form of a spreadsheet. A column indicating the amount of match for grants was also requested.

Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, recommended looking at the level of funding required.

Information on funding of non-mandated services was also requested.

Stevens said the elected officials may be able to assist in determining which functions are mandated and a minimum level of support. He said consideration should also be given to the long-term impact of modifying the level of funding and "leveraging for the future".

Kroeker distributed the following documents (Exhibit B):

- \* Lancaster County Comparison FY03 to FY02 Expense Budget
- \* Lancaster County, Comparison of Budgeted Payroll Costs FY03 Compared to FY02
- \* Lancaster County, Employees by Agency, Last 5 Years
- \* General Government Miscellaneous
- \* Justice System Miscellaneous
- \* Health & Human Services
- \* Keno Fund, FY03 Proposed Budget
- \* Lancaster County, Building Fund Budget
- \* Agency 12 - State Treasurer, Program 149 - Aid to Counties
- \* Agency 46 - Department of Correctional Services; Program 750 - Jail Reimbursement Aid

Kroeker noted a 10% reduction in aid to counties (a reduction of \$81,737 for Lancaster County). He said prisoner reimbursement was initiated in FY00 to offset a reduction in aid to counties that was part of a property tax relief package and said that reimbursement is being eliminated in FY04.

The Board asked Gary Lacey, County Attorney, how to address the problem of inmates sentenced to the State Penitentiary remaining in Lancaster County Corrections until the State accepts them at the Penitentiary.

Lacey recommended that a meeting be set up with Harold Clarke, Department of Correctional Services Director, to discuss the problem.

Kroeker said the 30 cent lid will be impacted by the reductions but said there is still some "breathing room". He said there may also be reductions in the social services area, which could impact General Assistance (GA) costs.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Schorr seconded to request a County Attorney's opinion regarding the County's liability for General Assistance, specifically addressing the issue of whether future budgets would be encumbered or a deficit appropriation required if bills exceed the budgeted amount. Hudkins, Schorr, Heier, Workman and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried.

Kroeker said the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 34 will help identify the "true costs" of functions. He said the auditors would like to do an assessment, estimated cost of \$8,000, with an additional \$10,000 projected for the accrual piece. He questioned whether the expense is justified in a "tight" budget year and recommended limiting it to the reporting model.

Board consensus was to review the matter at the Mid-Year Budget Retreat.

Workman questioned funding of the Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission, noting \$86,736 is proposed for FY03.

Hudkins expressed concern with the increase proposed for the Lincoln Area Agency on Aging (8.51%) and said he believes it should be closer to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). He also suggested the need for a mechanism to evaluate how dollars are spent and asked the Chair and Vice Chair to raise those issues with Mayor Wesely in their monthly meeting.

Brief discussion took place on whether to pursue implementing a county sales tax.

Heier noted that there may be an increase in the budget for the Assessment Center if Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) withdraws its funding.

Hudkins asked whether the County can charge F<sup>3</sup> for overhead costs.

Kroeker said that issue was raised in a letter sent to F<sup>3</sup> in December, 2002. A response has not been received, to date.

Stevens said it may be beneficial to identify indirect costs for county agencies, recognizing that the County may have to subsidize those costs, as it may generate reimbursement for federal programs and grants.

Stevens also suggested that a Board subcommittee meet with the County Attorney, Public Defender and members of the judiciary to discuss how to make the trial system more efficient.

Kroeker expressed concern regarding rising pharmaceutical costs for the General Assistance (GA) Program. He noted that the State no longer does Medicaid pricing for Corrections and may increase its administration costs and said it may be more cost effective for the County to run its own program.

Stevens suggested the need for a mechanism to evaluate and/or challenge tax exempt status.

Eagan said it is a complicated process and said legislation may be necessary.

Hudkins asked the County Attorney, County Assessor and Budget & Fiscal Officer to research the impact of LB 775 (Employment & Investment Growth Act) and what type of properties are receiving this credit.

The Board asked that discussion of salaries be scheduled with Georgia Glass, Personnel Director, on the January 23, 2003 Staff Meeting agenda.

#### **4 ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Workman moved and Stevens seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:31 a.m. Hudkins, Schorr, Heier, Workman and Stevens voted aye. Motion carried.

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Bruce Medcalf  
County Clerk